

Serial No. 09/986,398
Response dated January 12, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2003

Docket No. 0630-1349P
Group Art Unit 2817
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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Two (2) sheets of revised formal drawings is submitted to amend FIGS. 3, and 4A-C in order to identify elements 63a' and 63a'' as specified by the Examiner.

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-14, and 16-20 are pending. Claims 1 and 18 are amended. Claims 1 and 18 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Objection to the Drawings

FIGS. 3, 4A, 4B, and 4C of the drawings are objected to. In response, two sheets of revised formal drawings are submitted to identify elements 63a' and 63'' as specified by the Examiner.

Specification Objection

The Examiner has objected to the specification because of several informalities.

In order to overcome this objection, the specification is amended herein in order to correct the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner. In addition, a Substitute Specification is being provided in order to place the application in better form. Also included is a marked-up copy of the original specification which shows the portions of the original specification which are being added and deleted. Applicants respectfully submit that the substitute specification includes no new matter and that the substitute specification includes the same changes as are indicated in the marked-up copy of the original specification showing additions and deletions. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1 and 18 because of an informality. In order to overcome this objection, claims 1 and 18 are amended herein in order to correct the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

In view of the amendments and arguments above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all of the Examiner's objections have been overcome.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of objection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for

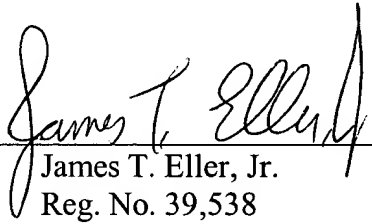
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any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.


Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
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0630-1349P
JTE/CTT/jeb/ags

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Attachments: Two (2) replacement drawing sheets
Substitute Specification (both clean and marked-up copies)